

# THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

• DUNHAM •

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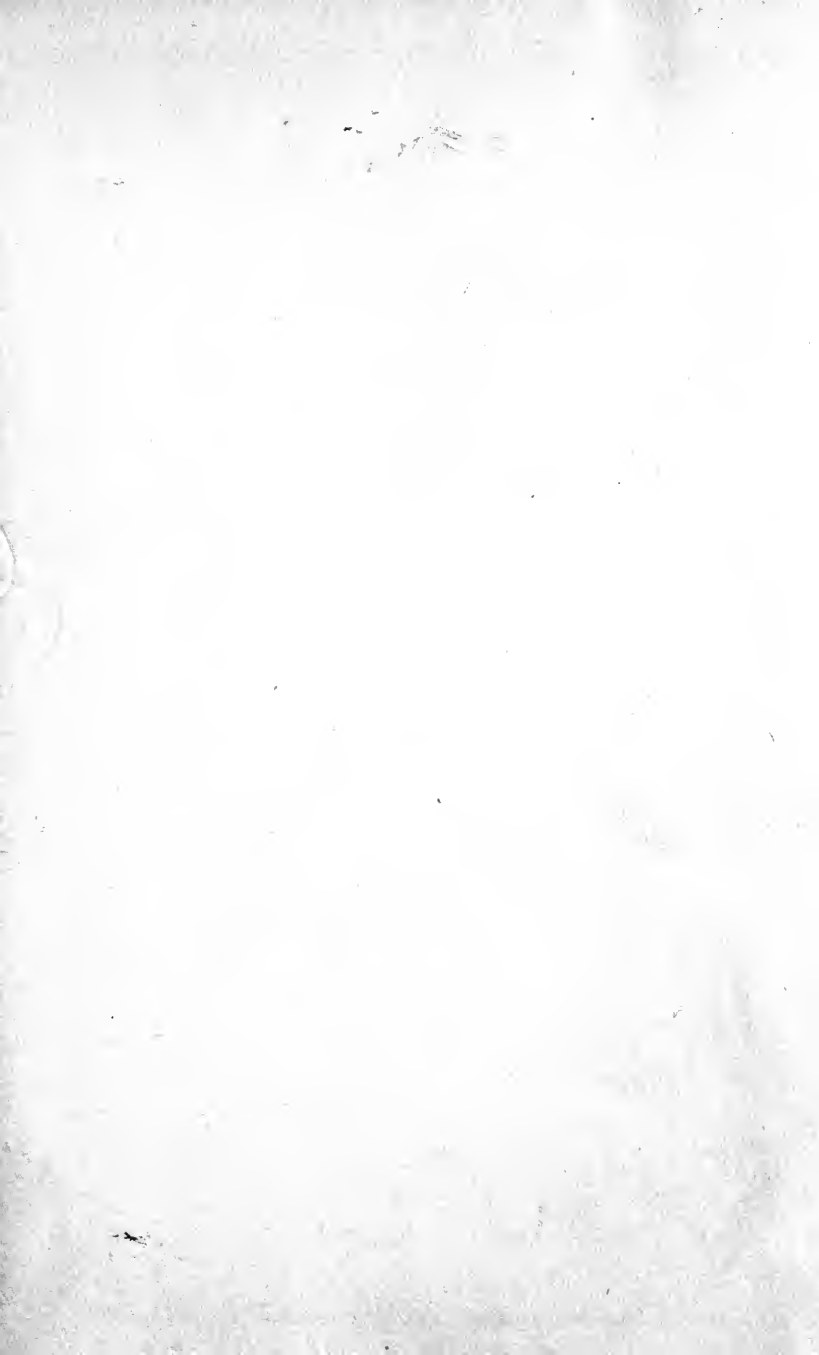
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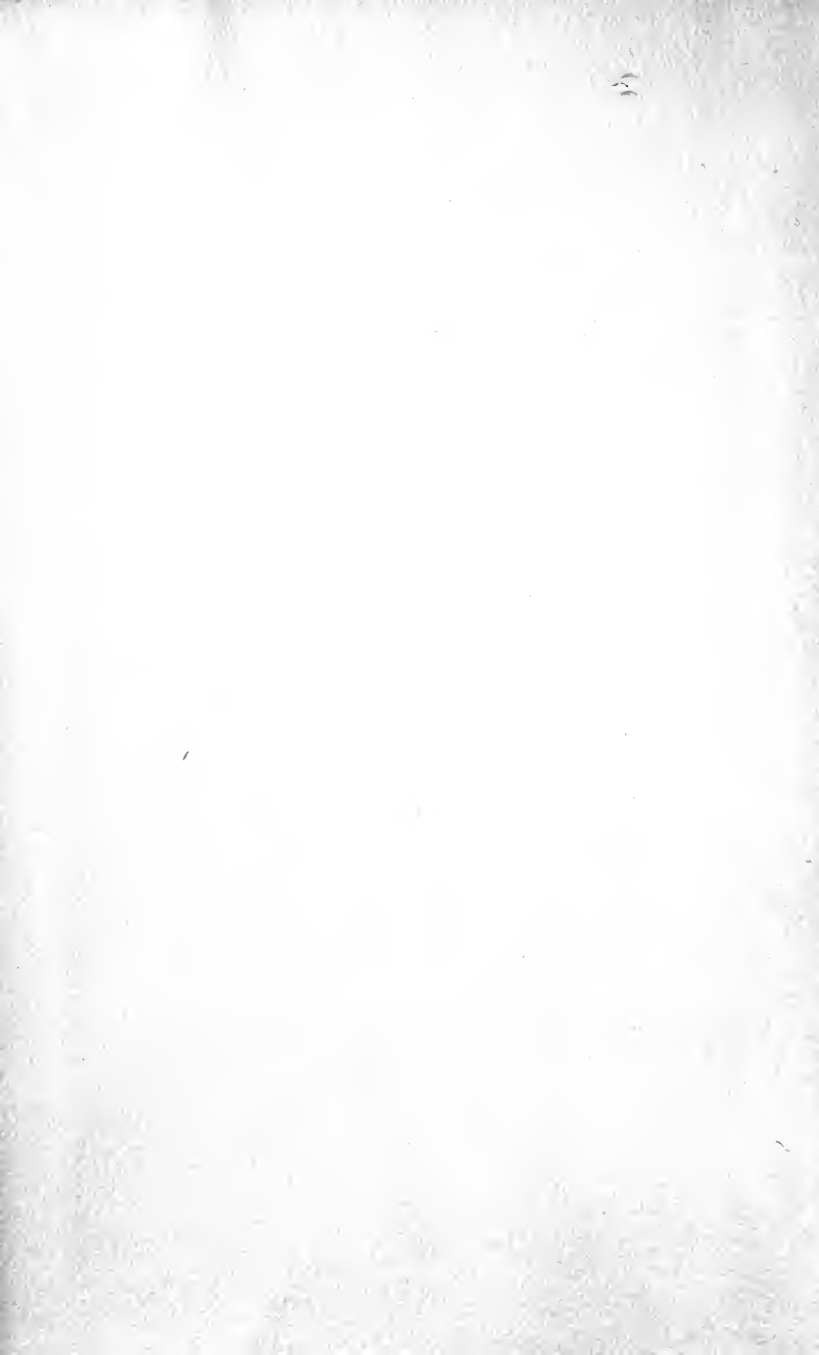
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For out of olde felles as men seith  
Cometh al this newe counseil to pere  
And out of olde booke in good seith  
Cometh al this newe science that men here

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THE MEN  
WHO BLAZE  
THE TRAIL

To  
Prof. William Dallan Armes,  
With the compliments of the  
Author -  
Sam C. Drumham.

Fresno, Cali.,  
July 15, 1913.





# THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

AND OTHER POEMS  
BY  
SAM. C. DUNHAM

---

With an Introduction by  
JOAQUIN MILLER

*Let others sing of those who've won  
Full hoard of virgin gold!  
I strike the lyre for those who've none,  
But yet are strong and bold.*

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TO THE  
ALABAMA

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## THE POET LAUREATE OF ALASKA

I HAVE asked permission of my friend, pardner and companion of the olden, golden Klondike days, to write an introduction to this revised edition of his Alaskan poems. He is not at all responsible for the title of this screed or its contents. In truth, he stoutly protests; for, like all true poets, he is doubtful of his merits and shy of favorable mention. But I have bullied him into letting me have my own way and shall say what I please. For I love the great new land of the ultimate North, the lone white silence which spreads its wings of mingled light and midnight even to the North Pole; and whoever loves this vast empire and can picture the life there, even in the humblest walks, as Dunham has done, I must love also from my heart of hearts.

Ever so much has been written of Alaska, but Sam C. Dunham has not only loved Alaska, he has lived Alaska; and his book shall live. Only

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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one other writer, a woman, Ella Higginson, in her great prose work, it seems to me, has really gone to the heart of Alaskan life and—death. The two authors and their works are as wide apart as Sitka and Nome; but each book is in its way entirely true, interesting and unique.

I had climbed the formidable Chilkoot Pass of ice and avalanches, with my eighty-pound pack and nearly sixty years on my back, and on reaching the Klondike addressed some lines to my fellow-adventurers, beginning:

Have you, too, banged at the Chilkoot,  
That storm-locked gate to the golden door?  
Those thunder-built steeps have words built to suit;  
And whether you prayed or whether you swore,  
'Twere one, where it seemed that an oath were a  
    prayer—  
Seemed that God couldn't care,  
Seemed that God wasn't there.

Sam C. Dunham, a close friend of the Commissioner of Labor at Washington, who sent him out nominally in the interest of commerce and labor, but really on a semi-secret mission, came on over the terrible Chilkoot Pass soon after, and as a whole mountainside of men and

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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women had been swept by an avalanche down the icy steep into eternity, he felt constrained to parody my lines and give anything but a glorious and romantic coloring to the condition of things, either on the Klondike or the way thither. But he did not protest. Even an avalanche, or all the avalanches in the world, would not have stopped or turned aside that mad torrent of humanity bound for the Klondike. He took the only wise course—made light of the whole most serious situation.

Dunham had been wisely chosen at Washington for this mission to the new goldfields. He had roughed it in California, Nevada, Utah, and Colorado, and was one of the heroic figures of Montana, and he knew gold mines and gold miners well. Almost any other man, sent out from the social center of the national capital, would have either turned back or at least sent out wails of official cries for help and protests against the incoming flood of half-destitute and wholly desperate humanity. But he did nothing of the sort. This close friend and private secretary of Senator Voorhees, this man of letters at Washington, sat down quietly on the Klondike, took his beans and bacon with the rest of us;

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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then when Nome broke out was on the firing line with dogs and sled along with the first. And under these circumstances were his realistic little poems written. And that is why they are so entirely photographic. He dealt only with men and the men of the hour. I also worked, worked hard and honestly as I could; but I dealt with Nature, the elements, and with old Indian traditions. My longest, strongest, and, I think, best, poem was written there.\* But I fell far short of Dunham in directness and picturesque force. His work is clean. Bret Harte and many others, in dealing with these mighty modern Argonauts, have seen fit to sail too often very close to forbidden lands in literature. But Sam C. Dunham's work is entirely clean. It is strong and the most truthful poetry I ever read.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

THE HIGHTS, Fruitvale, Cal., Dec. 1, 1912.

\* "A Song of Creation." It constitutes the fifth volume of Mr. Miller's Complete Poems.



On February fifteenth, nineteen thirteen, while this book was being put in type, Joaquin Miller died at his home on The Hights, a stone's throw from where I am writing these lines. I owe much to him. My very first attempt at verse-writing was my "Reply" to his "Comrades of the Klondike," and it was his generous encouragement during our intimate association at Circle City in the winter of 1897-8 that impelled me to write the verses that appear in the first section of this little volume. He was the wisest and best and kindest man whom I have ever known—the greatest all-round human being whom it has ever been my privilege to call "friend." With all the love and veneration that one man can have for another, I send this greeting to him in his new home on the sunset side of his Sundown Sea, where trail-worn poets rest:

Beyond the moon, beyond the sun,  
Beyond the farthest star,  
In the realms of everlasting peace,  
Out where our loved ones are.

SAM C. DUNHAM.

Fruitvale, Cal., Feb. 28, 1913.

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## DEDICATION

To the one who stood by my side with undaunted soul through the stress and strain of impending shipwreck in the great Ice Pack on Bering Sea; who stood with me, hand in hand, no less intrepidly, on the Great American Desert, amid the rack and ruin of an exploded mining boom; who has exemplified, through the succeeding years of persistent and apparently perpetual adversity, the sublimity of patience and courage and helpfulness; who is my wisest and keenest, and yet my kindest, critic, and the only "pardner" who has played fair with me at all times and in all situations;—to the bravest and best fellow in the world, my wife, this little book of verse is affectionately dedicated.

SAM C. DUNHAM.



## PREFACE

THE verses in the first part of this book were originally published in 1901, under the title of "The Goldsmith of Nome and Other Verse." That little volume, which was dedicated "To the workers on the Yukon, who, through the long, cold winter of national neglect, have been patiently working while watching and waiting for the ice to melt," contained the following preface:

"These verses were written while the author was under assignment to Northern Alaska in 1897-8 as a Statistical Expert of the Department of Labor, and in 1899-1900 as a Special Agent of the Twelfth Census. They are the free expression of some sentiments which 'official courtesy' quite properly excluded from his reports to the Commissioner of Labor and the Director of the Census. Most of them have appeared in various newspapers—The New York Sun, The San Francisco Examiner, The Wash-

ington Post, The Illustrated London News, and others. They are presented as an appeal from the tax-burdened and unrepresented people of Alaska to the Government at Washington for relief from the wrongs which they have borne too patiently for twenty years. In 1900 Alaska paid into the Treasury of the United States revenues averaging \$1,207.43 for every day in the year. For what?"

The verses in the first edition are reproduced here practically without revision. Except for the thin sop of an emasculated legislative assembly, the Government at Washington has done so little for Alaska during the last decade that they are as timely now as when they were written.

Most of the verses in the second part originally appeared in The Tonopah Miner while I was editor of that paper.

SAM C. DUNHAM.

FRUITVALE, CAL., Dec. 10, 1912.

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

Let others sing of those who've won  
Full hoard of virgin gold!  
I strike the lyre for those who've none,  
But yet are strong and bold—  
Who've blazed the trails through a pathless  
waste  
And on the world's new chart have traced  
The lines that lead where the treasure's placed,  
And all their secrets told.

They search the streams and hillsides rend,  
The hidden truth to learn;  
They trudge where land and sky-line blend,  
And gaze till eyeballs burn;  
They scale bleak heights whence vast plains  
sweep,  
And sow for those who come to reap,  
While wives and sweethearts in homeland weep  
And pray for their return.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Afar in regions of night-gloomed day  
Their slender shadows leap;  
O'er snow-crowned peaks they fight their way  
To where the Gold-gods sleep;  
Where the congelations of the ages lie,  
And athwart the dome of the midnight sky  
Aurora's moon-drenched splendors fly,  
Onward their footsteps creep.

Out where Deathland, reft of bush or tree,  
Spreads like a sun-browned lawn;  
To the verge of the rigid, ice-locked sea,  
Where twilight weds the dawn;  
Where a sheenless moon sails the sunlit night,  
Where inert and dim bides the Mystic Light,  
And the white swan ends his vernal flight,  
They still are pressing on.

So while others sing of the chosen few  
Who o'er the Fates prevail,  
I will sing of the many, staunch and true,  
Whose brave hearts never quail—  
Who with the dauntless spirit of pioneers  
A State are building for the coming years,  
Their sole reward their loved ones' tears—  
The men who blaze the trail!



## ALASKA TO UNCLE SAM

Sitting on my greatest glacier,  
With my feet in Bering Sea,  
I am thinking, cold and lonely,  
Of the way you've treated me.  
Three-and-thirty years of silence!  
Through ten thousand sleepless nights  
I've been praying for your coming—  
For the dawn of civil rights.

When you took me, young and trusting,  
From the growling Russian bear,  
Loud you swore before the nations  
I should have the Eagle's care.  
Never yet has wing of eagle  
Cast a shadow on my peaks,  
But I've watched the flight of buzzards  
And I've felt their busy beaks.

Your imported cross-roads statesmen  
(What a motley, sordid train!)  
Come with laws conceived in closets—  
Made for loot and private gain!

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

These the best that you can furnish?  
Then God help the heathen folk  
You have rescued from the burden  
Of the rotting Spanish yoke!

I'm a full-grown, proud-souled woman,  
And I'm getting tired and sick—  
Wearing all the cast-off garments  
Of your body politic.  
If you'll give me your permission,  
I will make some wholesome laws  
That will suit my hard conditions  
And promote your country's cause.

By the latest mail you sent me  
(Nearly all your mails are late!)  
Comes the news that you've gone roving  
In your proud old Ship of State—  
Dreaming with a sunburnt siren  
By the sultry southern seas,  
Where the songs of your enchantress  
Swoon upon the scented breeze.

You are blind with lust of conquest  
And desire for foreign trade,  
Or you'd see the half-drawn dagger,  
With its brightly-burnished blade,

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Sticking in the loosened girdle  
Of the black brute by your side—  
If you treat her as I'm treated  
She will stick it through your hide.

Curb your taste for sun-killed countries,  
Where the natives loaf and shirk;  
Come to richer northern regions,  
Where the people think and work.  
If you want a part of Asia  
When the Chinamen are killed,  
Run a railroad up to Bering—  
I will show you where to build.

Come next spring and count my treasures  
And don't stop at Glacier Bay,  
Like the many high commissions  
You have started up this way.  
You will see my wooded mountains,  
With their citadels of snow  
Gleaming in the purple distance  
Through the pearl-hued alpen-glow.

Standing on my flower-strewn hillsides,  
Where my mighty rivers meet,  
Gazing o'er my verdant valleys,  
Spreading seaward from your feet,

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

You will see the sunlit splendors  
Of my moonless midnight skies,  
Gilded with a light supernal  
Shining straight from Paradise.

If you stay till Hoary Winter  
Has entombed the silent land,  
You will read celestial sermons,  
Written by the Master's hand  
On the azure walls of heaven,  
Where Aurora's tinted light  
Weirdly flits like summer lightning  
All the ghostly Arctic night.

When you come I'll show you wonders  
That will cause you great surprise,  
And if gold is what you're seeking  
You will open wide your eyes.  
Drive away your Wall street schemers,  
With their coupons and their nerve—  
Then while you extend your commerce  
I'll expand your gold reserve.

You will find a magic city  
On the shore of Bering Strait  
Which shall be for you a station  
To unload your Arctic freight,

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Where the gold of Humboldt's vision  
Has for countless ages lain,  
Waiting for the hand of labor  
And the Saxon's tireless brain.

You shall have a cool vacation,  
Hunting for the great white bear,  
And you'll soon forget Manila  
And the trouble you've had there;  
For as in the morn of nations  
Every highway led to Rome,  
You and all your restless rivals  
Will be sailing straight to Nome.

You will wake a sleeping empire,  
Stretching southward from the Pole  
To the headlands where the waters  
Of your Western ocean roll.  
Then will rise a mighty people  
From the travail of the years,  
Whom with pride you'll call your children—  
Offspring of my pioneers.

## COMRADES OF THE KLONDIKE

### I

Have you, too, banged at the Chilkoot,  
That storm-locked gate to the golden door?  
Those thunder-built steeps have words built to  
    suit,  
And whether you prayed or whether you swore,  
'T were one, where it seemed that an oath were  
    a prayer—  
Seemed that God couldn't care,  
Seemed that God wasn't there!

### II

Have you, too, climbed to the Klondike?  
Hast talked as a friend to the five-horned stars?  
With muckluc shoon and with talspike  
Hast bared gray head to the golden bars,  
Those heaven-built bars where Morning is born?  
Hast drunk with Maiden Morn  
From Klondike's golden horn?

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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### III

Hast read, low-voiced, by the Northlights  
Such sermons as never men say?  
Hast sat and sat with the Midnights,  
That sit and that sit all day?  
Hast heard the iceberg's boom on boom?  
Hast heard the silence, the room?  
The glory of God, the gloom?

### IV

Then come to my sunland, my soldier—  
Aye, come to my heart, and to stay!  
For better crusader or bolder  
Bared never his breast to the fray,  
And whether you prayed or you cursed,  
You dared the best—and the worst—  
That ever brave man durst.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

## A REPLY

### I

I, too, have banged at the Chilkoot;  
I have scaled her storm-torn height  
And slid down her trail with dizzy shoot  
That produced a Northern Light;

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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And I uttered a curse-laden prayer—  
Of course God didn't care,  
For only the Devil was there.

### II

I, too, have climbed to the Klondike,  
Through bog and muck and roots,  
Till my legs were as stiff as thy talspike  
And the water filled both of my boots;  
Have drunk from golden horn  
With maidens, night to morn—  
I acknowledge the corn.

### III

Have heard, loud-voiced, by the Northlights  
Such oaths as only men say;  
Have lain awake through the Midnights  
And fought mosquitoes all day;  
Cursed Klondike's—not the iceberg's—boom,  
And paid an ounce for a room,  
Which filled my soul with gloom.

### IV

My friend, I'll come to thy sunland  
As soon as this long winter's o'er,  
And I'll drink to thy health in the one land  
Whither thy thoughts ever soar;



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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

And though this drought be the worst  
That ever humanity cursed,  
At last we'll banish our thirst.

### ARCTIC LIGHTNING

Far out where the sullen darkness  
Palls the silent, ice-chained sea,  
Spring, low-arched, the fragile Northlights  
O'er the realm of mystery;  
From their haunts beneath the crescent,  
Where the murky shadows lie,  
Come Aurora's pale magicians  
With their festoons for the sky,  
And while the Color Sergeant musters  
His Immortal Seven  
To hang their banners from the dome  
And drape the walls of heaven,  
Straight he hurls his shafts of silver  
High up in the star-gemmed blue,  
Where the wraiths of light, soft-tinted  
And of swiftly-changing hue,  
Through the long and ghostly vigils  
Of the voiceless Arctic night  
Weirdly gleam and faintly whisper  
As they tremble out of sight.

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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TO JOAQUIN MILLER

*Written at Chilkoot Pass*

Here at the Gate of the Arctic,  
Facing the silent land,  
Backward I reach through the distance  
And grasp your heart-hot hand.  
If our earthly trails ne'er cross again,  
I'll meet you farther west,  
On the sunset side of your Sundown Sea,  
Where trail-worn poets rest.

## JUST BACK FROM DAWSON

I've just got back from Dawson, where the Arctic  
rainbow ends,  
An' the swiftly-rushin' Klondike with the mighty  
Yukon blends;  
Where the sun on Christmas mornin' in the act  
of risin' sets,  
So that just a minit's sunshine is all that region  
gets;  
An' the rimplin' midnight glories through the  
moon-tranced heavens fly,  
While the guileless sour-dough miners set  
around the stove and lie  
'Bout the good old times at Circle, 'fore the  
smooth promoters came  
An' set the country boomin' in a way that is a  
shame.

I've just got back from Dawson, where the large  
mosquitoes sing,  
An' soon as they forsake the camp, their small  
successors sting;

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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Where 'long about the last of June the sun again  
surprises  
The new-arrived inhabitants, an' while it's settin'  
rises;  
Where the price of pay-streak bacon is two dol-  
lars for a pound,  
An' to treat your friends at Spencer's costs an  
ounce or two a round,  
An' they sell Seattle cider, in the guise of dry  
champain,  
Which institoots a lingerin' drunk that's very far  
from plain.

I've just returned from Dawson, where the  
charge for anteeek eggs  
Makes considerable difference in length of buy-  
ers' legs;  
Where our helpful friends in Washington, mis-  
led by bad advice,  
Concluded they could operate steam enjins on  
the ice,  
An' are tryin' now the reindeer, a-feedin' them  
on moss,  
But wherever they've been tried so far there's  
been a heavy loss,

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

While all the old trail-breakers to their pet traditions cling

An' still maintain with vehemence—"The dog's the proper thing."

I've just reached here from Dawson, where I seen Frank Slavin spar,

An' also seen his victim a-revivin' at the bar

While Frank shook hands with all his friends an' loudly did declare

That he could lick Fitzsimmons, too, if he was only there;

An' seen Oklahoma Wilson attempt to instigate

A coop de Colt, but ere his gun became articulate

They yanked him to the barracks in a way he won't forget,

An' to cultivate his harmlessness they're boardin' him there yet.

I've just come out from Dawson, where everybody's health

Is bein' undermined an' ruined in a wild-eyed rush for wealth,

An' a score or so of schemers, on evil projects bent,

Are robbin' the community to a terrible extent;

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Where the men who dig the treasure are strong  
    an' brave an' bold,  
Wrenchin' from the glacier's bowels stockin's  
    full of yellow gold,  
While the transportation pirates slyly syndicate  
    their gall  
With the criminal intention of absorbin' of it all.

I've just escaped from Dawson, where the ice  
    grows ten feet thick,  
An' doods who like their baths served cold don't  
    take 'em in a crick;  
Where no one, be he rich or poor, is ever dubbed  
    a "hero"  
Till he has done his hundred miles at 60 less  
    than zero;  
Where men chop water out in chunks an' pile it  
    on the banks,  
An' make their hot-air heaters out of empty coal-  
    oil tanks,  
An' read back-number papers by the unobtrusive  
    rays  
Of tallow-dips an' davy lamps—dim lights of  
    other days.

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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I've just emerged from Dawson, a bad financial  
wreck,  
For instead of gettin' dust galore, I got it in  
the neck,  
Where Adam got the apple in that episode with  
Eve,  
Which led to woe an' stern decree that they  
would have to leave,  
Like thirty thousand other jays, by golden vi-  
sions lured,  
Who climbed the trails, through hardships to  
which they weren't inured,  
To find that them Dominion knaves, by dastardly  
deceits,  
Had concessioned everything in sight an' even  
leased the streets.

SENCE I COME BACK FROM  
DAWSON

Sence I come back from Dawson to these old  
familiar scenes,  
I've read the yaller journals an' the 10-cent mag-  
azines,  
An' to sort o' classify events an' find out what  
occurred  
While I was hibernatin' where the light of God  
was blurred,  
I've been searchin' through the columns of the  
daily picture-press,  
To see if I could ascertain, or formulate a guess,  
Why the scribblers who last autumn so artisti-  
cally lied  
'Bout the riches of the Klondike concluded to  
subside.

Then every trail was occupied by journalistic  
beats  
Who represented (with slim cards) all saffron-  
tinted sheets



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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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From Seattle to Savannah an' from Bangor to  
Duluth,  
But nary one of them was there to represent the  
truth.  
They stumbled up the Chilkoot an' they loafed  
along the lakes,  
An' when not a-photographin' things or writin'  
up their fakes,  
Imbided raw rum from Hudson Bay, an' dressed  
in goffin' suits,  
Stood 'round an' asked old-timers 'bout the short-  
est Klondike roots.

Now I've gathered from my readin' that the  
reason why they quit  
Writin' lies about the Klondike was, as lawyers  
say, to-wit:  
Havin' placed us in cold storage an' done all  
the harm they could,  
They felt a awful cravin' for a brand of booze  
that's good,  
An' left at once to sponge it, an' unable to re-  
frain  
From causin' people trouble, they arranged a  
war with Spain,

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

An' to properly conduct the same, rushed bravely  
to the front  
An' led all the gallant charges an' bore the bat-  
tle's brunt.

Now, while us Klondike refugees most greevously  
deplore  
The mournful fact so few of them passed to the  
other shore,  
Our grief is curtailed by the thought which  
punctuates our sobs,  
That some of them who were not killed have  
lately lost their jobs.  
An' sence my feelin's is aroused, some words  
I've got to say  
About the highly lucrative but lowly sinful  
way  
The experts an' perfessers told the things they  
didn't know  
(A-settin' in warm rooms at home) about the  
realm of snow.

Of all their stories I have read, the worst about  
that far land  
Was written by a man whose brow has long  
worn Fiction's garland,

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Who in the "Klondike Number" of a well-  
known magazine  
Told of the sylvan beauties of some trails he'd  
never seen,  
With purlin' brooks an' wild delights an' picnics  
everywhere  
(Things that exist in poets' dreams, but don't  
exist up there);  
Then followed in the steps of them he'd so  
cruelly misled,  
To write about the scenery an' enumerate the  
dead.

Perhaps 't will seem that I've assumed a gay an'  
flippant air,  
But while I'm settin' here to-night a ghost stands  
by my chair.  
Again I see a famished form stretched 'neath a  
sombre sky;  
Again I fold the shriveled hands an' close the  
death-glazed eye;  
I see the horrors Falsehood wrought, an' hear  
again the wail  
Of its victim as he perished on a panoramic  
trail,

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Where his bleached an' badly-scattered bones is  
all that's left to tell  
How he battled with the terrors of a thousand  
miles of hell.

Now, as I ain't no statesman, I can't figger what  
we'll gain  
Through our unexpected legacy of trouble from  
old Spain;  
But as a unkissed hero from the barren Yukon  
Flats,  
I modestly petition our distinguished diplomats:  
In your God-directed efforts to emancipate man-  
kind,  
Don't forget your helpless brothers in your Arc-  
tic wilds confined,  
But in your swoop for liberty, to right an' justice  
true,  
Extend a helpin' hand to them—annex Alaska,  
too.

## I'M GOIN' BACK TO DAWSON

I'm goin' back to Dawson, an' suppose I must  
explain

How I generated nerve enough to hit that trail  
again.

I've tramped this land from east to west an' tried  
it north an' south,

An' found the people short on heart but very  
long on mouth;

I've wandered through the byways an' I've  
mingled with the crowds,

An' felt a dam sight lonesomer than when above  
the clouds

I stood alone 'mid ghostly isles that pierced a  
spectral sea

An' cried in vain to far-off stars that couldn't  
answer me.

I met a great philanthropist, whose wealth they  
say was ground

From the labor of a thousand serfs—whose  
fame's a-spreadin' round

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Because he built a edifice an' filled it full of  
books  
To learn the poor submission to incorporated  
crooks,  
An' seen him stop a barefoot kid with papers in  
the street  
An' hand to him a nickel for a flamin' one-cent  
sheet,  
Then sneak behind him for a block, a-keepin'  
him in range,  
To nab the limpin' little cuss if he tried to swipe  
the change.

An' I rambled through the alleys of a big de-  
partment store,  
Admirin' of the handsome gents which walk  
along the floor  
A-tellin' ladies where to go to get the cheapest  
things—  
Where "Cash!" appears to be the song that  
everybody sings,  
An' somethin' like five hundred girls that ought  
to be at school  
Lean wearily against the shelves because there's  
nary stool—

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

An' I'm told the chap who owns the claim has  
the immortal nerve  
To pay but half a case a day to them that stand  
an' serve.

I'm also told that this here man exists in princely  
style  
In marble halls set on a hill that slopes away a  
mile,  
An' to stupefy his conscience he's donated from  
his wad  
Some money to the heathens an' has built a house  
for God;  
An' drowsin' in his temple on a recent Sabbath  
morn,  
I seen again the faces of them girls so pale an'  
lorn,  
An' wondered if the cuss was bankin' on the  
heathens he had saved  
For a discount up in heaven on the white folks  
he'd enslaved.

Then I roused up from my dreamin' that the  
organ had produced  
An' thought about the Yukon boys I've so shame-  
fully traduced,

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

An' seen again quite clearly, in no music-painted  
dream,  
Two snow-blind men a-stumblin' 'hind a limpin'  
Siwash team—  
Old Cooley an' his pardner Jo, who never go to  
church,  
A-strugglin' back to Circle from their long trip  
out on Birch  
To feed the starvin' Tananas—a service so high-  
priced  
They'll not collect their wages till they hand  
their bills to Christ.

In trampin' through this high-toned land I'm  
painfully surprised  
To learn that butchers so refined an' highly civ-  
ilized  
That they'd disdain to occupy a mansion built of  
logs  
Provide our soldiers beef an' things I wouldn't  
feed my dogs;  
Which makes me want to get back where the  
canned goods ain't so bad  
An' the girls you meet on every hand ain't pale-  
faced, thin, an' sad—



---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Where the milk of human kindness ain't so  
rigidly congealed  
That we'd let 'em wander from the trail because  
they wasn't heeled.

I want to hear the soothin' tones of Bates's old  
guitar  
As he sings about "The Fisher Maiden" at "The  
Polar Star,"  
An' watch Brick Wheaton rattle with his yaller  
mandolin  
As he chants the charms of Injun hootch an'  
other kinds of sin;  
I want to hear them songs once more an' want  
to see my friends  
Where the swiftly-rushin' Klondike with the  
mighty Yukon blends,  
An' they size a feller-sinner by his heart an'  
what he knows  
An' never ask his Southern name or criticise his  
clo's.

I want to see Aurora—not the one that greets  
the day,  
But her weak an' pallid namesake—try to drive  
the night away,

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

An' watch her throw her shafts of silver far up  
in the sky,  
While her color-bearers tint 'em with an always-  
changin' dye,  
An' from the walls of heaven all their fragile  
banners swing  
Till the air's alive with whispers like the swishin'  
of a wing,  
An' from the zenith flash great lights across the  
interspace  
Till you feel you're in God's presence an' can  
almost see His face.

So I'm goin' back to Dawson, an' I'll float along  
that way  
When the ice moves down the river, 'long about  
the last of May,  
When the birds an' flowers are flirtin' an' the  
white clouds sail the blue—  
An' the energetic insecs get in their fine work  
too.  
I know now what I didn't when I went up there  
before,  
That it is soshul suicide to linger 'round here  
poor,

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

For though the Arctic winters there are long an'  
dark an' cold,  
They're warmer than my welcome when they  
found I brought no gold.

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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A FATAL GIFT \*

When a man gets along to about forty-two,  
He's apt to sit down and let pass in review  
The scenes of his past, and he's likely to make  
An effort to spot the fatal mistake  
Which changed the whole course of human  
    events  
With regards to his hopes and honest intents.

One makes his mistake in the morning of life,  
In failing to choose or in choosing a wife;  
Another takes a drink and the evil is done,  
And Dishonor completes what the Devil begun,  
While many evade Life's pitfalls and snares  
Till Old Time has garnered or silvered their  
    hairs.

But mine was the earliest failure on earth,  
For I made my mistake at the hour of birth

\* Read at a dinner given to the author at St. Michael,  
Alaska, on his forty-fifth birthday, February 22, 1900.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

By making my début, an undressed kid,  
The same day of the month that Washington did,  
And I look back now and see quite plain  
Why all of my efforts have been in vain.

You've heard about George and his cute little ax  
And his weakness for sticking too close to the  
facts.

My very first effort to emulate him  
Gave a shock to my system that made my head  
swim,

For when I confessed to my volatile dad  
I got the worst licking I ever have had.

In spite of that set-back I've kept up the fight  
'Gainst Error and Falsehood, for Truth and the  
Right;

But always through life I've felt the restraint  
Of the gift handed down by my Natal-day  
Saint,

And I'm forced to admit that Virtue's reward  
Is the only return I can thus far record.

No matter what pathway I've chosen in life,  
In city or country or political strife,

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

On the crest of a mountain or the marge of a  
lake,  
There stood close beside me my fatal mistake,  
And wherever my lofty ambition has led  
I've seen my hopes wither, my projects drop  
dead.

But here in the Arctic, where Falsehood is  
tough,  
The pathway of Truth is peculiarly rough,  
And as I gaze out o'er the white frozen sea  
I feel all too keenly it's no place for me,  
For no one who sticks to George W.'s creed  
Can ever expect in this land to succeed.

## THE LAMENT OF THE OLD SOUR DOUGH

I've trudged and I've starved and I've frozen  
All over this white barren land—  
Where the sea stretches straight, white and  
    silent,  
Where the timberless white mountains stand—  
From the white peaks that gleam in the moon-  
    light,  
Like a garment that graces a soul,  
To the last white sweep of the prairies,  
Where the black shadows brood round the  
    Pole.

(Now, pray don't presume from this prelude  
That a flame of poetical fire  
Is to burst from my brain like a beacon,  
For I've only been tuning my lyre  
To the low, sad voice of a singer  
Who's inspired to sing you some facts  
About the improvements in staking  
And the men who mine with an ax.)

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

I've panned from Peru to Point Barrow,  
But I never located a claim  
Till I'd fully persuaded my conscience  
That pay dirt pervaded the same;  
And this is the source of my sorrow,  
As you will be forced to agree  
When you learn how relentless Misfortune  
Has dumped all her tailings on me.

I worked with my pardner all summer,  
Cross-cutting a cussed cold creek,  
Which we never once thought of locating  
Unless we located the streak;  
And when at the close of the season  
We discovered the creek was a fake,  
We also discovered the region  
Had nothing left in it to stake.

We traversed the toe-twisting tundra,  
Where reindeer root round for their feed,  
And the hungry Laplanders who herd them  
Devour them before they can breed.  
Here it seemed that good claims might be plenty,  
And we thought we would stake one—per-  
haps;  
But we found to our grief that the gulches  
Were staked in the name of the Lapps.



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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

A hundred long leagues to the northward,  
Through the untrodden, sun-burnished snow,  
We struggled, half blind and half famished,  
To the sea where the staunch whalers go.  
We found there broad beaches of ruby  
And mountains with placers and leads,  
But all save the sky was pre-empted  
By salt-water sailors and Swedes.

Then we climbed the cold creeks near a mission  
That is run by an agent of God,  
Who trades Bibles and prayer-books to heathen  
For ivory, sealskins and cod.  
At last we were sure we had struck it,  
But alas! for our hope of reward—  
The landscape from sea-beach to sky-line  
Was staked in the name of the Lord!

We're too slow for the new breed of miners,  
Embracing all classes of men,  
Who locate by power of attorney  
And prospect their claims with a pen—  
Who do all of their fine work through agents  
And loaf around town with the sports,  
On intimate terms with the lawyers,  
On similar terms with the courts.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

We're scared to submission and silence  
By the men the Government sends  
To force us to keep law and order,  
While they keep claims for their friends,  
And collect in an indirect manner  
An exceedingly burdensome tax,  
Assumed for a time by the traders  
And then transferred to our backs.

We had some hard knocks on the Klondike  
From the Cub-lion's unpadded paws,  
And suffered some shocks from high license  
And other immutable laws;  
But they robbed us by regular schedule,  
So we knew just what to expect,  
While at Nome we're scheduled to struggle  
Until we're financially wrecked.

I'm sick of the scream of the Eagle  
And laws of dishonest design,  
And I'm going in search of a country  
Where a miner can locate a mine;  
So when I have rustled an outfit  
These places will know me no more,  
For I'll try my luck with the Russians  
On the bleak Siberian shore.

## THE GOLDSMITH OF NOME

### I

I am resting by my anvil,\*  
And my forge is growing cold;  
I have ceased my age-long labors,  
I have beaten out my gold;  
I have scattered wide my treasures  
On the superficial sands,  
Where they lie unlocked and waiting  
For the work of human hands.

Where my far-spread barren beaches  
Lay untrod through countless years,  
I can see the meager camp-fires  
Of the hardy pioneers  
Who have learned anew my secret  
From the unsecretive sands,  
And have sent my golden message  
To the workers in all lands.

\* The name of the richest creek in the Nome district (Anvil) was suggested by a large rock on the top of a mountain, about five miles from the beach; from many points of view this rock resembles a blacksmith's anvil.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Gazing southward through the valleys  
Where the ice-chained rivers sleep  
'Neath their wide-flung ghostly mantles  
And the Arctic nightwinds sweep,  
I see men of dauntless spirit—  
Men whose brave hearts never quail—  
Struggling northward o'er wild barrens,  
Breaking for the world a trail.

Looking out across the waters  
Stretching sunward to the Sound,  
I can see the sons of labor  
Boarding vessels hitherbound;  
I can hear the great crowds cheering  
On the fast-receding piers,  
Where sad mothers clasp their children  
And gaze seaward through their tears.

I can see my people coming,  
Sailing over many seas;  
I can see the white sails swelling  
As they catch the southern breeze;  
I can see the black smoke trailing  
From the sloping steamer-stacks,  
Throwing swiftly-circling shadows  
Over foamy, swirling tracks.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

From the swarming, stifling cities,  
Where wan children gasp for breath;  
From the shadeless, unploughed prairies,  
Where grim cyclones scatter death;  
From the old world's worked-out placer  
And the rock-choked mountain gorge,  
They are coming by the thousands  
For the product of my forge.

## II

Here I wrought throughout the ages,  
By the silent, tideless sea,  
Beating out my golden ingots  
For the empire yet to be—  
Watched the mighty strife of Nature,  
Heard the glacial millstones grind,  
Marked the rise and fall of nations,  
Timed the progress of mankind.

While the seven-hued Arctic lightning  
Faintly flashes through the night,  
Tinting all the ghostly landscape  
With its soft, elusive light,

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

I am dreaming of the glory  
Of the prehistoric race  
Which inhabited these valleys  
When the first stampede took place.

When I entered on my labors  
Stately palm trees weirdly threw  
Slender shadows in the moonlight,  
Where the sea slept warm and blue;  
In the dark primeval forest,  
Dank beneath a tropic sun,  
Roamed wild beasts of form colossal,  
Greater than the mastodon.

Birds of brilliant sunlit plumage  
Caroled in the fronded trees,  
And their songs were wafted seaward  
On the balmy summer breeze;  
Fragrant flowers exhaled their odors,  
And the distant hazy hills  
Lulled the fruitful vales and uplands  
With the music of their rills.

From the plain swept wooded mountains  
So immeasurably high  
That their gleaming, snowy summits  
Pierced the opalescent sky,

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

While the sun sent shafts of amber  
To adorn their clinging clouds,  
And the moon as came the night-tide  
Veiled their forms in silver shrouds.

Women framed in perfect beauty,  
Greatest gift that God had given,  
Reared to manhood happy children,  
Taught them truth derived from Heaven;  
Men of elemental wisdom,  
Giants of that elder time,  
Made the land a perfect Eden,  
Free from poverty and crime.

### III

From beyond the distant mountains,  
Where the day pursues the dawn,  
Came strange men of pallid visage,  
Active brain and feeble brawn,  
Who brought all their wiles and vices,  
Leaving truth and virtue home,  
And at once took up the burden  
Of good government for Nome.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

They brought all the arts and customs  
Of the countries whence they came,  
All their culture and refinement,  
All their wickedness and shame,  
And they taught my simple people  
All their subtlety of mind  
And the luxury of living  
On the labor of their kind.

They unearthed my hidden treasures,  
Filled their coffers full of gold,  
Trafficked in the market places  
Where their fellowmen were sold,  
Made of woman's soul and virtue  
The cheap plaything of an hour,  
Gave the rights of man to Mammon,  
Bought their way to place and power.

When God saw the selfish uses  
To which men had put His gold,  
Black His brow became with anger  
And His heart grew stern and cold,  
And He hurled His bolts of thunder  
From the battlements of Heaven  
Till the sun went out in darkness  
And remotest space was riven.



---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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Then came on that awful travail  
Which made Mother Nature groan,  
Shook the stars from out the heavens,  
Threw the Devil from his throne,  
Swung the planets from their orbits  
Till they aimless swept and whirled,  
Turned the Tropics to the Arctics,  
And repolarized the world.

Through the frigid, age-long winter  
Here in loneliness I dwelt  
In my breezy glacial cavern,  
Waiting for the ice to melt,  
Till at last I caught a vision,  
Through the sun-transfigured rime,  
Of my vales once more aslumber  
'Neath the haze of summertime.

### IV

Then I watched that wondrous waking,  
Nineteen hundred years ago,  
When the great searchlights of Heaven  
Set the universe aglow,

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Throwing rays of hope and comfort  
Through the darkness of despair  
Hanging o'er the heavy laden  
And the weary everywhere.

All night long the earth lay sleeping  
'Neath a pale, mysterious light  
Beaming from the throne of Heaven,  
Where God's lamps were burning bright;  
Choirs seraphic made sweet music,  
Faintly heard through gates ajar—  
In the East, above the morning,  
Shone a new Irradiant Star.

Jesus came and taught His lessons,  
Walked the earth a little space,  
Lighted all the ways of sorrow  
With the glory of His face,  
Planted hope in hopeless bosoms  
As he went from door to door,  
Wept and fainted by the wayside  
'Neath the burdens of the poor.

He rebuked the righteous rascals  
Who stood in the street to pray,  
Scourged the brokers from God's temple,  
Drove the hypocrites away,

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Lifted up forsaken women,  
Cheered the lonely and distressed,  
Folded hungry little children  
Gently to His loving breast.

Then the money-changers dragged Him  
Like a drunkard through the street,  
Thrust sharp thorns in His pale forehead,  
Pierced with nails His bleeding feet,  
Stretched Him on the tree of torture,  
And His quivering muscles tore,  
As upon the cross of labor  
They now crucify the poor.

'As His Spirit sped to Heaven,  
Clothed in raiment white as snow,  
From afar I heard His promise  
To all workers here below:  
"Watch and labor in my vineyard,  
Bear the burden and the pain;  
I am going to my Father,  
But I'll come to you again."

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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### V

Then a great awaking pity  
    Seized upon my swelling breast,  
And my heart was filled with yearning  
    For the wretched and oppressed;  
As a father loves to labor  
    For the children of his bone,  
I have wrought here for my people,  
    In the silence and alone.

I have watched them sadly toiling  
    Through the centuries as slaves,  
Never laying down their burdens  
    Till they dropped them at their graves,  
And while watching I've been working  
    For the workers in all lands,  
For the millions born to labor,  
    Their sole heritage their hands.

Not as wrought the other Goldsmiths,  
    Jealous of their hoarded wealth,  
Who in darkness through the ages  
    Wrought in secret, and by stealth  
Hid it in the heart of mountains  
    From the primal stratum hurled,  
Or beneath the slag and cinders  
    In the basement of the world.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

They wrought for the thrifty masters,  
For the men of fertile brain,  
Who grow rich through toil of others,  
Thriving on their brothers' pain—  
Who by traffic with earth's rulers  
Gain control of Nature's sod,  
Arrogating as their birthright  
A co-partnership with God.

\* \* \* \* \*

Come and take my golden treasures  
From the shining, yielding sands;  
They shall be the untithed wages  
Of your free, unfettered hands.  
If the men who prey on labor  
Try to grasp the gold you glean,  
I will call the guardian nation,  
And she'll scourge them from the scene.

For the self-selected savior  
Of the islands of the sea  
Will not idly stand and witness  
Such a blow to liberty;  
She that 'round the lazy heathen  
Her protecting arms has thrown  
Will not let her working children  
Be defrauded of their own.

SINCE THE JUDGE LEFT HERE  
FOR NOME

Like one just waking from a dream, I walked  
abroad to-day  
And rambled to the green-roofed town that  
sleeps across the bay;  
I wandered to the empty house, where I was  
wont to go  
And always found a welcome and a solace for  
my woe—  
Where erstwhile on cold winter nights (so long  
and yet so short!)  
We boys from all the island round did frequently  
resort  
To celebrate the passing hours by playing cards  
and pool,  
While our kind host ran back and forth and with  
his famous tool  
Extracted corks and filled us up on beer and  
wine and stuff  
Till each had sworn repeatedly that he was full  
enough.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

I stood despondent at the door and faced the  
frozen foam  
That from my frail and faltering feet reached  
westward to Cape Nome,  
And as I gazed with brimming eyes across the  
shining sea,  
Some sober thoughts and sentiments were blown  
ashore to me.

I pictured in my burning brain the Judge upon  
the trail,  
Entombed within a native shack or struck by  
Arctic gale,  
And then that old, old question came and  
bothered me again,  
"Are those who go or those who stay the sport  
of greatest pain?"  
And as I rubbed my throbbing brow, my aching  
heart repined,  
"The ones who suffer most of all are those who  
stay behind!"

I'm sure as westward speeds the Judge he little  
apprehends  
The frightful havoc he has wrought among his  
former friends;

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

If he could hear them sigh and groan and see  
    them try to walk,  
I'm sure he never would again produce his private stock  
Of Runnymede and Pommery's and Mumm's seductive secs  
And pour the same persistently down their receptive necks.  
(The thing that seems most strange to me and  
    fills me with surprise  
Is how the Judge's "private stock" affects a fellow's eyes—  
Last night before he went away the town was  
    painted red,  
But now it wears a ghastly green like grave-grass  
    . o'er the dead.)

\* \* \* \* \*

I wandered through the hatless hall and passed  
    from room to room,  
Last night alive with mirth and light, to-day  
    adead with gloom.  
I went into the parlor, where we used to sit  
    around  
And suffer till the Judge his punch did perfectly  
    compound.



---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

The bookcase stood with vacant shelves and  
doors extended wide,  
As if it yearned for vanished friends that once  
reposed inside;  
Some flowering plants, left there abloom with  
blossoms chaste and rare,  
Already drooped their slender stems for want  
of woman's care—  
The sight of these familiar things intensified my  
grief  
So that I sadly turned away and sought outside  
relief.

I blundered with uncertain steps into a closet  
dark,  
Where stood the shapes of spirits flown, all  
glassy-eyed and stark—  
A hundred bottles, all uncorked (last night with  
fullness rife),  
Proclaiming by their emptiness the emptiness of  
life.  
What happened then? Was it a dream? What  
was I looking at?  
What was it that on yonder shelf so calm and  
proudly sat?

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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(It was a large cold cruse of Mumm the Judge  
forgot to crack—  
I cracked it with celerity, my lips began to  
smack,  
And to my careless absent friend I drank this  
truthful toast:  
“Of all the drinks I’ve drunk with you I needed  
this one most!”)

\* \* \* \* \*

The room that had appeared so dark was bril-  
liantly ablaze—  
The scene now shone resplendent with the light  
of other days;  
The place was full of brawny men and charming  
women too—  
The former rather numerous, the latter some-  
what few;  
I heard again the happy jest, the reading of old  
rhymes,  
The tales of hardships long endured, the stories  
of old times;  
I heard once more the sweet old songs, sung  
with a graceful art  
That made us think of childhood’s days and  
softened every heart;

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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And then I sank into a chair and wished I was  
in Nome,  
And while I wished I fell asleep and dreamed a  
dream of home.

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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TO THE YUKON ORDER OF  
PIONEERS

*In Memory of Charles S. Lavante. Died at Nome,  
Sept. 8, 1900.*

Will you let an Arctic Brother lay a garland on  
the bier

Where sleeps the stark and pallid form of a  
Yukon Pioneer?

Will you let me pay a tribute to the one you  
mourn to-day,

Whose soul is speeding homeward from its  
worked-out dump of clay?

I spent a winter with your friend among the  
Yukon hills,

And shared with him his simple joys and com-  
plicated ills;

I saw him tested by the rule which few at Nome  
observe,

That we should do to other men what we our-  
selves deserve.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

He broke the rules of order and the excise ordinance  
By selling untaxed liquor at the old-time Siwash  
dance;  
But he never broke the maxim of the mushers on  
the trail,  
That it's wrong to pass a comrade when you see  
he's apt to fail.

I see his face a-beaming as he stood behind the  
bar  
And listened to the soothing tones of Bates's old  
guitar,  
In the good old days at Circle, ere the courts  
and lawyers came  
To rob our richest sluices in a way that is a  
shame.

I hear again his gentle voice and see his sad,  
sweet smile,  
As he told the tales of hardship on the creeks  
at Forty Mile—  
How you wintered on bad bacon and on prehis-  
toric beans,  
And when you had the scurvy steeped the spruce  
boughs for your greens.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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He told me all about the trails that climbed up  
in the air,  
Meandered o'er the mountain peaks, and ended—  
God knows where!  
He told me of the hopeful time you spent at  
Cassiar,  
And how you used to rock out gold on old Bo-  
nanza Bar.

He told me how the traders used to do you boys  
up brown  
By putting up the prices when they said they'd  
put them down,  
And all about that awful year you fellows almost  
died  
Because you missed "The Racket" and were  
forced to stay inside.

His latchstring always hung outside, and you  
never had to knock,  
For he had no knocker at his door, and he  
hadn't any lock;  
When you asked him for a porterhouse he dished  
up caribou,  
And when you craved a whisky straight he set  
up "hootchinoo."

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

He never liked the Klondike, and he had no faith  
in Nome,  
And since he came, in '86, he got no news from  
home;  
But he never lost his courage, and he always  
used to say  
That the good old times at Forty Mile would  
come again to stay.

The good old times have come to him—but not  
at Forty Mile—  
And nevermore at Circle will you see his happy  
smile;  
For he's gone to take his well-earned rest in the  
universal way,  
And I know he'll find God's latchstring a-hang-  
ing out to-day.

## A GREETING TO THE SWEDES

*From Their Fellow-sufferers at Topkuk*

We learn to-day that you've received a mes-  
sage from the Sound

Which loosed the legal ligatures with which  
your claims were bound.

We send our warmest greetings, and hope that  
you will get

The dust the Boss Receiver is a-hanging on to  
yet.

We had our little laughs last year, and chuckled  
at your woes

Caused by the festive jumpers and the mournful  
old Sour Doughs ;

But we've ceased to smile and laid our laughs  
upon the upper shelves,

For we have learned to our regret just how it is  
ourselves.

We have a sub-receiver here, who's working out  
our mine

In a systematic manner which makes our hearts  
repine.



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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

He brought a damned expensive plant, shipped  
in his boss's name,  
And planted it against our "kick" upon our richest claim.

He brought a gang of bosom friends, helped up  
here from below,  
And wouldn't give a single job to any one we know,  
And when he took the riffles out and weighed his shining swag,  
He wouldn't let us see the scales or even heft the bag.

We called upon the "lowest" court and all the powers that be—  
We raised our mournful cries to Heaven and sent them out to sea;  
We cried in vain for earthly help and almost ceased to fight,  
When Nature took a hand and gave a knockout blow for right.

Last week the foam-crowned Sea King came and served his unbought writ,  
And Aleck's high-priced plant now lies deep down beneath the spit.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

God jumped our claim and drove away the horde  
of unpaid hands,  
Who wander up and down and weep along our  
worked-out sands.

We join with you in praise to-day and raise a  
joyful shout  
In honor of the righteous laws that knocked the  
jumpers out.  
Let's celebrate in dry champagne the powers that  
wield the rod—  
You thank the U. S. Circuit Court while we give  
thanks to God!

## THE POOR SWEDE

A square-headed, hard-working Swede,  
Propelled by inordinate greed,  
    Mushed around in the cold  
    Till he found some coarse gold,  
And then came to town at full speed.

A lawyer with galvanized jaw,  
Whose mode of procedure was raw,  
    Sent a thief out to jump  
    The rich claim of the chump  
And stake it "according to law."

The Swede is now stretched on the rack  
And trying to get his claim back,  
    While the Court takes its time  
    To consider the crime  
Till the receiver fills up his long sack.

## THE LAWYER AND THE MINER

### I

A lawyer was disbarred back home  
And found it convenient to roam;  
    He floated this way  
    In a cargo of hay  
And inflicted his presence on Nome.

He waited for clients to rob  
Till his stomach demanded a job;  
    Then he haunted the street  
    For something to eat  
Till he looked like a Klondike slob.

### II

A miner climbed over the hills  
And prospected the gulches and rills  
    Till he discovered enough  
    Of the right kind of stuff  
To drive away poverty's ills.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

He staked a rich claim in his name  
And proceeded to ground-sluice the same;  
    Then he came in and bragged  
    Of the gold he had bagged—  
That's why he's not working his claim.

### III

The case was decided next day  
In the usual *ex parte* way,  
    And the miner then found  
    He was robbed of his ground  
And couldn't get even a lay.

The lawyer now has ample means  
And frequents the most brilliant scenes;  
    He eats three times a day  
    At the Paree Caffay,  
While the miner eats bacon and beans.

## HOMeward BOUND

I am out upon the ocean,  
Sailing southward to the Sound  
With six hundred busted brothers,  
Kicking hard, but homeward bound.  
There are sixty in the staterooms  
And some eighty souls or so  
Sleeping on the floors and tables,  
While the rest seek sleep below.

Of the sixty in the cabin  
Only thirty had the stuff,  
While the others came on passes  
Or some other sort of bluff.  
How the hundreds in the steerage  
Got the gold to get them home  
Always will remain the greatest  
Of the mysteries of Nome.

There's a siren from Seattle  
Who is traveling in style,  
Basking in the brilliant sunshine  
Of the purser's dazzling smile.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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She has jumped a first-class stateroom  
That is simply out of sight,  
And has oranges and apples  
With her champagne every night.

There's a widow with two children  
Who is trying to get home,  
Having given up the struggle  
When her husband died at Nome.  
Both her kids exhibit cravings  
For all kinds of fruits and nuts,  
But they can't get 'nough of either  
To distend their little guts.

There's a smooth absconding lawyer,  
Wearing diamonds like a sport,  
Who spends all his lucid moments  
Praising Nome's imported Court.  
He has beefsteaks in his stateroom,  
Purloined by the pantryman,  
While his clients in the steerage  
Eat cold corn-beef from a can.

There's a Topkuk sub-receiver  
Who is smuggling like a thief  
All the gold the gang could gobble  
For their late-transported Chief.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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He indulges in fresh oysters,  
Fine cigars and foreign wines,  
While the man who first staked Topkuk  
Tells us how they robbed his mines.

There are counts galore from Paris  
And a few of them from Spain,  
Who invaded Nome to traffic;  
But they'll not do so again,  
For they found their debts so heavy  
That they had to leave them there,  
While their unpaid Dago valets  
Had to come out on the Bear.

Late last night they gave a banquet,  
And imposed some heavy fines  
To defray the steward's charges  
For his bummiest brands of wines.  
All the guests stood the assessment  
Without making any kick,  
But as soon as they get sober  
They'll appreciate the trick.

I shall not recount the horrors  
And the terrors of the trip,  
For the same may be imagined  
By all those who know the ship;



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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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But I'll simply say in closing  
That the most distressing fact  
That has come to my attention  
Is the way the ladies act.

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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TO THE YUKON SOUR DOUGHS

I've done just as you told me to that night I  
    read to you  
My simple Yukon verses and you said, "By God!  
    they're true!"  
But I can't report much progress in a literary  
    way,  
For the folks down here don't hanker for the  
    things I have to say.

I read my verses to some men officially quite  
    high,  
Who could give you boys up there relief if they  
    would only try;  
But I couldn't make them smile or weep or even  
    once relax—  
Perhaps they don't like poetry that's based on  
    solid facts.

I read them to the statesmen who combined and  
    formed a trust  
To monopolize sluice-robbing and to confiscate  
    your dust,

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

And shipped to Nome last summer a gang of  
hired hands  
To drive you from your placers and to gut your  
golden sands.

I held them with my glittering eye and read my  
very best,  
Just as the Ancient Mariner held up the wedding  
guest;  
But just before I made my point they vanished  
with the "whips"  
To reorganize the army and to subsidize some  
ships.

I tried to get my verses in the daily picture-press,  
But the men who guard its columns sent them  
back to my address,  
With the gentle intimation, "We've no room for  
news from Nome;  
We're too busy with our neighbors to consider  
crimes at home."

Then I sent them to the censors of the 10-cent  
magazines;  
But they wanted stuff from China or the un-  
whipped Philippines,

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Or a lot of pictures showing how the British  
butcher Boers—  
Not a word about the pirates who infest your  
barren shores.

So I've had my verses printed, and I send them  
up to you,  
Who for years have borne the burden, but are  
yet as staunch and true  
As when first you blazed the pathway to the  
white and silent land;  
And I know that when you read them you will  
feel and understand.

## LATER VERSES



## A WISE SWEDE

Last year, when the fever for staking  
Raged hotly on tundra and creek,  
I fled for my life, and while breaking  
The trail to a far-distant peak,  
To stake for my health on the summit,  
I mushed up a canyon that feeds  
The famous-rich-coveted placers  
Discovered and staked by the Swedes.

As far as my eyesight could travel—  
From the head of the creek to its lakes,  
To the sky-reaching rim of its gravel—  
There was nothing but silence and stakes;  
For the gold which God in His goodness  
Had placed there to make the Swedes glad  
Lay deep 'neath a godless injunction  
Which covered the claims they once had.

I mushed up the canyon as quickly  
As a musher like me could proceed  
Till I came to a claim where a sickly  
But exceedingly square-headed Swede

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Was rapidly rocking a rocker  
With a skillful and minerlike twist  
That yielded each clean-up a panful  
Of nuggets as big as your fist.

The claim had been staked to perfection,  
As even a novice could see,  
For it bristled in every direction  
With stakes that were tall as a tree.  
It looked like a hopfield in autumn—  
No jumper would ever presume  
To make an attempt at pre-emption,  
For the landscape afforded no room.

I marveled why Back-room Injunction,  
The servant of Organized Greed—  
His Honor's most fraudulent function—  
Had never "injuncted" this Swede;  
And I asked him to tell me the secret  
Of how he had managed to keep  
His claim from the clutch of the lawyers  
And all its great benefits reap.

He climbed up and sat down beside me,  
On a big pile of well-sharpened stakes,  
And calmly but searchingly eyed me,  
With the care that a mind-reader takes;



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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Then he leaned, with an air confidential,  
Till his whiskers reposed on my cheek,  
And with a smile that was placid he whispered,  
"I yump it myself every veek!"

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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### BRICK WHEATON'S GRAVE \*

I've been across to Oakland Hights, just as I  
promised you,  
An' fixed "Brick" Wheaton's restin' place the  
way you told me to,  
An' planted in the coolest spot, among the  
strange plants there,  
The slender sprigs of Yukon fern you sent him  
in my care.

But Jack McQuesten tells me that he's sure  
they'll never grow,  
'Cause they ought to be a-sleepin' now beneath  
the Yukon snow;  
He says all things that's raised up North is sen-  
sitive an' queer—  
That even men that's been up there ain't satis-  
fied down here.

\* Written in San Francisco and dedicated to Circle  
City Camp No. 7, Arctic Brotherhood, in memory of  
W. R. Wheaton, who died at Nome, July 27, 1900.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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He tells me that in twenty years he never knew  
a man  
That spent a winter in the North—except one  
African—  
An' came outside to see the sights, that wasn't  
broke an' tired  
An' homesick for his Yukon friends before a  
month expired.

He says his little children fret an' mope aroun'  
all day  
To have him take 'em back again to where they  
use to play  
An' fish along the river bank an' imitate the cry  
O' wild geese tracin' long black lines across the  
summer sky.

He says they keep a-beggin' an' implorin' him  
to go  
Back where they used to frolic with their play-  
mates in the snow  
An' watch the stars an' wonder at the tremblin'  
Northern Lights  
That flit an' dance an' whisper through the  
moon-tranced Arctic nights.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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He says the Malamutes he brought to make his  
children glad  
Became before a week went by low-spirited an'  
sad,  
An' moped aroun' just like the kids, an' even  
though he tried  
To cheer 'em up with empty cans, they pined  
away an' died.

Old Jack declares that it's the heat that makes  
his children weep  
An' renders Yukon plants an' dogs so difficult to  
keep;  
He says there's somethin' in the hootch these  
roadhouse-keepers sell  
That makes this climate worse for us than sum-  
mertime in hell.

But I've got my own opinion why his little chil-  
dren cry,  
An' why the Yukon plants an' dogs get homesick  
here an' die.  
It ain't the heat an' ain't the hootch, but a sort  
o' soshul fog  
That breeds an awful lonesomeness that even  
kills a dog.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

The high-toned children born down here with  
pedigrees all right  
Decline to play with Yukon kids whose mothers  
ain't pure white,  
An' when they pass 'em on the trail they elevate  
their nose  
An' laugh because they're pidgin-toed an' criti-  
cise their clo's.

The high-toned curly poodle dogs with ribbons  
roun' their necks  
Don't act a bit more soshable, but sneak behind  
an' vex  
The Malamutes till they get mad an' spoilin' for  
a fight,  
But when they turn aroun' to scrap the poodles  
ain't in sight.

I mush along the crowded trails—they call a  
trail a "street"—  
An' nod an' smile an' say "Hello!" to all the  
folks I meet;  
But every cuss looks straight ahead an' emu-  
lates the speed  
Of a Circle City miner on a Tanana stampede.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

They never stop an' ask a man how he is gettin'  
on,  
Or try to ascertain from him if all his bacon's  
gone;  
They never take a stranger in to spend a' pleas-  
ant hour,  
Or ask him if he's out o' beans or if he needs  
some flour.

This heartless conduct makes me sad an' lone-  
some like the kids,  
An' every Sunday afternoon, unless the fog for-  
bids,  
I cross the bay to Oakland, where I while away  
the hours  
Beside Brick's peaceful restin' place an' cultivate  
his flowers.

An' while I set there by his grave, revolv'in' in  
my mind  
Why Death most always takes the good an'  
leaves the bad behind,  
My memory goes a-mushin' an' it mushes to the  
scenes  
Where Brick an' me was neighbors, in the far-  
off land of beans.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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I set an' dream about the things we use to do  
up there  
That was legally unlawful, but that otherwise  
was square,  
In the good old days at Circle, 'fore the lawyers  
formed a trust  
To jump our richest minin' claims an' confiscate  
our dust.

Again I hear the soothin' tones o' Bates's old  
guitar,  
As he sung about "The Fisher Maiden" at the  
Polar Star;  
Again I see Brick rasslin' with his yaller mando-  
lin,  
As he chanted 'bout the charms o' hootch an'  
other kinds o' sin.

Again I hear his anecdotes that use to make us  
smile,  
About the soshul scandals that excited Forty  
Mile,  
An' watch his evolutions as he use to frisk 'an'  
prance  
An' liven up the Lancers at the old-time Siwash  
dance.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Brick had a lot o' weaknesses, but most of 'em  
was strong  
Compared to Christian virtues, an' but few of  
'em was wrong.  
He sometimes got bewildered, but he weighed  
our gold dust fair,  
An' I recall but one time when his conduct  
wasn't square.

That's when he stole my parkie for the hungry  
shiverin' cuss  
That nearly starved at Dawson 'fore he floated  
down to us,  
An' took him to my cabin, where he put him in  
my bed  
An' filled him full o' hootch an' beans an' left  
him there for dead.

He never passed a comrade havin' trouble on  
the trail  
Until he'd lingered long enough to hear his  
mournful tale,  
An' whether it was strictly true or somewhat  
otherwise,  
It always proved sufficient to secure some fresh  
supplies.



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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

He never broke a contract for an insufficient  
cause,  
An' never jumped a minin' claim or broke the  
minin' laws;  
For he had an inborn weakness for the old  
Yukon belief  
That a man who jumps a placer is an acrobatic  
thief.

In dividin' with a pardner he was never known  
to make  
An error in division, an' he never tried to take  
Advantage o' the clean-up, like some modern  
pardners do,  
An' he never kicked a Siwash dog or sawed a  
boat in two.

He's climbed up past the great white peaks that  
overlook the vale  
Where God has built a roadhouse for the men  
who blaze the trail,  
An' he's restin' there an' waitin' for his old-time  
Yukon friends  
To climb up there an' join him when their earthly  
mushin' ends.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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When all the kindly deeds he done are entered  
over there  
By the honest Camp Recorder, who records our  
titles fair,  
I'm sure the Great Impartial Judge, in passin'  
on the same,  
Will rule he ain't no alien an' entitled to a  
claim.

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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A YUKON VISION \*

As one who holds a sea-shell to his ear,  
On some far mountaintop, can hear the moan  
Of Ocean's sad, eternal monotone,  
So he who contemplates this Relic here,  
Methinks, may catch this vision, sharp and clear :  
Two rival monarchs of the frozen zone  
In mortal combat for the Great Moose  
throne,  
With Death in midnight shadows lurking near ;  
The swiftly gathering wolf-pack's hunger-cry  
Across the ghost-pale snow beneath the  
moon ;  
The low, discordant dirge of dying groans ;  
The fading life-light in a death-glazed eye ;  
And lying stark, as dawns the Arctic noon,  
This Relic, 'tween two piles of polished  
bones.

\* Lines engraved on the silver plate on interlocked moosehorns found on the Yukon in 1898, and now in possession of the San Francisco-Alaska Club of San Francisco. Plate presented to the club by Erik O. Lindblom.

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THE MAN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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TO ANDREW CARNEGIE

We're informed that you're afraid  
To explore Death's gloomy glade  
Till you've restitution made

Of the pelf

You extracted from the toil  
Of the men who sweat and broil,  
Keeping nearly all the spoil

For yourself.

You imported hordes of Huns,  
And with clubs and gatling guns  
Drove our working native sons

From your mills,

While the Congressmen you paid  
On the armor-plate you made  
A protective tariff laid

In their bills.

You find balm in the belief  
That the most colossal thief  
May repent and buy relief

For his soul;

But the law of God declares  
Ere he climb the golden stairs  
He must pay the rightful heirs

All he stole.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Now the men who earned your gold  
Rapidly are growing old—  
Weak from hunger and from cold,  
                    They can't work;  
With old age fast creeping on,  
With their loved ones starved and gone,  
They are waiting for the dawn  
                    At the kirk.

While they beg their daily bread,  
With no place to lay their head,  
And no hope till they are dead,  
                    'Neath the mould,  
You are squandering their means  
'Mid attractive foreign scenes,  
And you'll buy the Philippines—  
                    If they're sold.

You are building everywhere  
Homes for books and pictures rare,  
While these men die of despair,  
                    And we're told  
That you hope to write your name  
On the world's great roll of fame  
And expect to gild the same  
                    With their gold.

---

## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

Now, we have a better scheme—  
It's no poet's idle dream,  
And it would your soul redeem  
                                At the last:  
Give your millions to the ones  
Whom you drove out for the Huns  
At the muzzle of your guns  
                                In the past.

If you'll take our scheme in hand,  
Everyone in this broad land  
Will declare your project grand  
                                And sublime.  
Peace of mind you'll then secure;  
God will bless you, we are sure,  
And your fame it will endure  
                                For all time.

RIDER ROOSEVELT

*(With apologies to the late Eugene Field.)*

If I were Rider Roosevelt and Rider Roosevelt I,  
No publisher would hesitate my manuscripts to buy.

I'd make no rhymes about the crimes committed by our courts,

But praise in prose our costly wars and other strenuous sports;

I'd print a book of tactics on the way my cowboys drilled,

And write a brilliant brochure on "Wild Animals I've Killed."

The printer of my books, I ween, could scarce the trade supply—

If I were Rider Roosevelt and Rider Roosevelt I.

If I were Rider Roosevelt and Rider Roosevelt I,  
He could not sell his books because the public would not buy;

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

He could not ride at eventide upon a prancing  
steed,  
Nor earn the wherewithal to buy the things his  
children need;  
He could not keep his charming wife in neces-  
sary gear,  
Not even if her frocks cost less than fifty pounds  
a year;  
And often when he tried to sleep, these thoughts  
would make him sigh—  
If I were Rider Roosevelt and Rider Roose-  
velt I.

If I were Rider Roosevelt and Rider Roose-  
velt I,  
No commonplace amusements would my nature  
satisfy.  
I'd bust a broncho every morn, as no mere cow-  
boy could,  
And sprint to Cabin John and back with lucky  
Leonard Wood;  
Then after lunch I'd rush across and from  
Elihu's files  
Extract some confidential facts and reprimand  
old Miles;



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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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I'd snub Mark Hanna and his friends and on  
myself rely—

If I were Rider Roosevelt and Rider Roose-  
velt I.

If I were Rider Roosevelt and Rider Roose-  
velt I,

He'd think it strange that I should thus the de-  
cencies defy,

And ask me if I had forgot the gallant things  
Miles did

While I squirmed in my mother's arms, a squall-  
ing, kicking kid—

How Miles fought on a hundred fields where  
thickest raged the fray,

With nary nigger regiment to charge and save  
the day;

At least I am inclined to think that he would thus  
reply—

If I were Rider Roosevelt and Rider Roose-  
velt I.

## GIVE US WATER, UNCLE SAM

*What we want out here is Water,  
Just plain Water, Uncle Sam,  
And we think you ought to bring it  
From a Governmental Dam.*

We've just learned that you've decided,  
After many years' delay,  
To supply the West with Water—  
If you find the scheme will pay.

We've been praying hard for moisture,  
Through the hot and arid years,  
But our cry of "Water! Water!"  
Has just lately reached your ears.

Though we're longing for this liquid,  
Yet we wouldn't have you think  
For a solitary minute  
That we want the stuff to drink.

We have other kinds of liquids,  
From the best brands to the worst,  
And they're mighty efficacious  
When it comes to quenching thirst.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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We maintain out here that Water  
Its great function best fulfills  
When it irrigates our ranches  
And brings power to our mills.

Come out here and help us finish  
What God left about half done  
When He turned the Desert over  
To the Lizard and the Sun.

If you can't resist the impulse  
That impels you to expand,  
You can find room for Expansion  
On our ancient arid land.

(As we furnished you with Silver  
When you wanted to resume,  
Now that you've espoused Expansion,  
We'll provide the bridal-room.)

You can go up in these mountains  
And construct a reservoir  
For a tithe of what you squandered  
In your recent foreign war.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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You can go down in these valleys  
And produce a flowing well,  
And you need not run your auger  
More than half way down to hell.

You can dig a hundred ditches  
From the Platte to Tonopah  
For much less than you have taxed us  
For your ditch at Panama.

With the differential duties  
Which you pay the Sugar Trust  
You can pump sufficient Water  
To forever lay our dust.

If you'll only bring us Water  
To our arid lands out West,  
We will ask no further favors,  
And will quickly do the rest.

We will make the Desert blossom  
Like the fertile Philippines,  
Where you're killing off the natives  
While we furnish you the means.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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We will show you what strong muscles,  
When engaged in honest toil,  
Can produce on barren uplands  
From a shallow, sandy soil.

We will fill your empty coffers  
With the stuff you like so well—  
Then the bankers can't control you,  
For you'll have gold bricks to sell.

When this prayer of ours you answer  
And our arid lands redeem,  
You will see the full fruition  
Of our hydrographic dream.

Then you'll see our verdant valleys,  
Smiling 'neath our azure skies,  
Circled by our purple mountains,  
Like the vales of Paradise.

*What we want out here is Water,  
Just plain Water, Uncle Sam,  
And we think you ought to bring it  
From a Governmental Dam.*

## THE NYE COUNTY ASS

The Ass that roams yon barren hill  
In search of sustenance  
Is not what carping critics call  
A subject for romance.

The housewives in this arid town  
Whose water he has spilled,  
We're very sure, from what they say,  
Would like to see him killed.

The prejudice of these, and all  
Who're wakened from their sleep  
At midnight by his mournful song,  
Is permanent and deep.

But he who burns the midnight oil  
And barter's night for day  
Is never wakened from his sleep  
By harsh nocturnal bray.

And such a one, with prejudice  
Against nor beast nor class,  
Would crave to be allowed to speak  
A good word for the Ass.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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The Ass has been so vilified—  
So persecuted, too—  
That we're inclined to spare the space  
And give the cuss his due.

Look at the picture here displayed;  
Inspect it with all care—  
Gaze in that solemn little face  
And read the story there:

The pathos of two thousand years  
Of ancient jokes and low,  
Of insufficient nourishment,  
And hereditary woe.

Go take your Bible from the shelf—  
Or come and borrow ours!—  
And turn to where it tells about  
The great diluvian showers.

Examine well the pictures there,  
And you will quick remark  
That Asses just like these of ours  
Took passage in the ark.

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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Of all the races on the earth—  
Or man, or fowl, or beast—  
We've every reason to believe  
The Ass has changed the least.

And when it comes to pedigree,  
Since Adam's slip and fall  
We are convinced the Ass can show  
The purest one of all.

Ours is the same old, patient Ass—  
Ears, appetite and all—  
That scaled the heights of Lebanon  
And browsed by Zion's wall.

His gentle voice, from time remote,  
Has undergone no change,  
And when we hear it in the night  
It has the same old range.

The song he sings on yonder hill,  
So loud—and sad—and slow,  
Was heard in far-off Palestine  
Two thousand years ago.



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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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It is the same heart-breaking song,  
Pitched in the same sad key,  
That woke the humble fishermen  
On storm-tossed Galilee.

The shepherds heard the sad refrain  
That wondrous winter night,  
When far athwart the eastern sky  
God flashed the World's New Light.

And now we make a plea to all  
To cease their loud complaints  
Against the songs of long ago  
That satisfied the saints.

The Ass has borne your burdens here  
So patiently and long,  
That you should bear as patiently  
The burden of his song.

And when you meet a weary Ass,  
O'erburdened on the road,  
No matter whether man or beast,  
Help lighten up his load.

## THE PROMOTER

'T was 'way back in the early days—a year ago  
last fall—

When the leases was perducin' big an' Tonopah  
was small;

When Butler use to stake the boys to do 'most  
anything,

An' never took no notes, but said, "Jest pay me  
in the spring!"

Before Zeb Kendall made his pile, an' full o'  
local pride,

Put up his costly Palace an' a sleepin' place  
supplied—

Before Frank Golden built a block, with confi-  
dence as great,

That's a marvel to all strangers an' an honor to  
the State.

Sence then we've had permoters here from al-  
most every State,

From the breezy Bay o' Fundy to the foggy  
Golden Gate—

From Montana down to Texas, an' from there  
to Puget Sound—

An' there's always 'bout a hundred o' these  
gents a-loafin' round.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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They've reduced our common fractions an' consolidated claims  
An' they've christened all our prospects with  
their double-jointed names  
Till it looks as though the nation hasn't any  
more to lend—  
An' extended our extensions till there's nothin'  
to extend.

One night a mine permoter from the mercenary  
East,  
With his cheek all smoothly shaven like a Philadelph-  
y priest,  
Got into camp from Sody on an overloaded stage,  
With his eyes inflamed an' rimy, an' a-smellin'  
strong o' sage;  
An' they dumped him down at Stimler's, where  
he stomped aroun' an' cussed  
'Bout the bloomin' arid desert while a-shakin' off  
the dust;  
Then he turned an' tackled Stimler, sayin' loudly,  
"I persoom  
That you filed my application for a two-com-  
partment room!"  
Stimler pondered for a minit, then he sort o'  
smiled an' said:

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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"You'll be mighty lucky, pardner, if you get a  
    'single' bed!  
I jest filed yer application, but I ain't got nary  
    'sweet,'  
An' the market ain't supplyin' us with very much  
    to eat;  
But we've got a lot o' liquids that's as good as  
    you can find—  
Pervided you're acclimeted to our pertic'lar kind:  
An' if you're feelin' frisky an' a-hankerin' to bet,  
We can furnish you with faro an' amuse you  
    with roulette."

Then a lot o' Mizpah leasers that was lingerin'  
    aroun'  
They allured the thirsty stranger to go out an'  
    see the town,  
An' they took him down to Brougher's an' they  
    showed him every sight  
An' persood the local customs which controls  
    the camp at night,  
An' when they got him sleepy and suffishuntly  
    confused,  
They took him to a tunnel which was very sel-  
    dum used,

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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An' they made the cuss a mattress out o' thousand-dollar ore,  
An' they covered him with empty sacks an' left him there to snore.

Next afternoon this expert, when he got himself released,  
Perpared a tecknicul report an' sent the same back East.  
He said: "A chap named Butler was a-munkey-in' aroun'  
An' stumbled 'gainst a chunk o' ore protrudin' from the groun',  
An' jest because it assayed high an' looked uncommon fine  
He sort o' lost his head an' thought he'd found a payin' mine."  
An' then he closed his first report: "They'll work her out by spring—  
I spent a whole night underground an' couldn't see a thing!"

Next day this here permoter was interrogatin' Jim,  
With a sort o' sneakin' notion that he'd get the best o' him.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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They was settin' down to Kendall's with a jug  
o' Holland gin,  
Which the same they was imbibin' out o' glasses  
made o' tin,  
When this expert sprung the question, with a  
wise look all aroun',  
"Are you certain, Mister Butler, that yer bloom-  
in' ledge goes down?"  
Old Jim he thought a second, while a-gazin' in  
his cup,  
Then he answered sort o' sudden, "Well, by  
God! she don't go up!"

That night he made his last report—this expert  
of renown:  
"I find the Mizpah don't go up, an' therefore  
turn her down!"  
Last month the news it got back East—it was  
too good to keep—  
That every mine in Tonopah is rich an' wide an'  
deep!  
When this permoter heard the news, he went  
an' got in bed,  
An' tossed an' groaned there for a week, an'  
then they found him dead,  
An' the coroner's certificut it was consize an'  
brief:  
"The late lamented wasn't sick—he simply died  
o' grief!"

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THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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LEM ALLEN OF CHURCHILL

*We sing of Lem Allen of Churchill,\*  
The man who runs second to Sparks,  
And his rare old collection of whiskers  
And his extra dry brand of remarks.*

We interviewed Lem up at Reno,  
And while drinking dry Mumm—which he  
bought—  
We told him our Nye county voters  
Were anxious to know what he thought.

He gave us his candid opinion  
Why Silver should reign as of old,  
And the same was as weighty and solid  
As a brick made of Tonopah gold.

He dissected our absentee statesmen  
Who mingle with Morgan too much  
And spend their vacations in Europe  
With Frenchmen and English and Dutch.

\* Lieutenant-Governor of Nevada, 1903-6.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

His voice it got husky and faltered

When the "Crime" he began to discuss,  
And he looked so exceedingly arid  
That we asked him to moisten with us.

He quickly absorbed the prescription,

But insisted on paying again,  
And he said, "In regard to my dryness  
I guess I had ought to explain:

"I try to raise sheep on the desert,

In a county adjacent to Nye;  
So it's largely climatic conditions  
Which renders my language so dry."

(Nine terms in the Silver State Senate,

And still he works hard on a ranch,  
Which proves that old Lem never tasted  
The plums that are picked from that branch.)

He depicted the sorrows of Silver—

He called her his "White Virgin Queen"—  
Since that hard-hearted, yellow-skinned traitor  
Went roving and treated her mean.



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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

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He deeply deplored the decadence  
Of everything good in the State—  
He asserted that even our whisky  
Is losing its strength here of late.

He claimed that the market for mutton,  
Like the market for silver, 's too cheap—  
That Sparks waxes rich raising cattle,  
While he nearly starves raising sheep.

He declared that the wealth of our statesmen  
Has slipped a few cogs in repute  
Since Clark ran a corner on copper  
And raised the quotations at Butte.

He painted a picture of plenty,  
With the skill of a master of old,  
When Silver was Queen of the Mountains  
And her legalized Consort was Gold.

He told the sad tale of our miners  
Who've hopelessly toiled through the years,  
While their wives and their children have fasted  
And sprinkled the desert with tears.

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## THE MEN WHO BLAZE THE TRAIL

---

He paid his respects to the bankers  
Who conspired to make Silver low-priced,  
And supported each separate statement  
With a similar statement by Christ.

He projected his mind to the future,  
When Gold will be kicked from the Street  
And return to the Queen of the Mountains  
And grovel in shame at her feet.

Just as Lem reached the heart of his subject  
We were forced to depart for our train—  
But we leaned on the bar ere we vanished  
To permit him to treat us again.

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*Now, list, all you Nye county voters,  
To our plain but prophetic remarks:  
You can bet that Lem Allen of Churchill  
Will run a hot second to Sparks.*

*And if Lem keeps on talking and treating  
In the extra dry way he's begun,  
He will turn down the traitors to Silver  
By a ratio of sixteen to one.*







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